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ABSTRACT

This speech points to the advantages and importance of certification and licensure of counselors. It includes a general discussion of certification, certification requirements, and projections for the future in terms of counselor training. Also included is a background discussion on licensure and its implications, especially in relation to counselor accountability, as well as suggestions for the future in terms of licensure. (LKP)

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CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURE

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CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURE

Certification and licensure increasingly have important ramifications for the development and strengthening of the counseling profession. There are some members who will be inclined to overlook one or the other of these legal avenues for professionalization. The following sections are prepared, however, as information to all members of the counseling profession. Hopefully future efforts in certification and licensure will be discussed, shaped, and supported by broad representation of its membership. Through such efforts, the hallmarks of a complete profession will emerge.

Certification

While certification has been chiefly a source of identification for school counselors, there have been signs of interest in certification by employment and rehabilitation counselors to gain a similar status (Carnes, 1971). Certification, although taken for granted by many persons in education, has the significance of determining who legally may be titled counselor in a given setting. Equally important, training and experience requirements are designed to insure that at least minimal standards are satisfied as a condition of employment. Counselors working in non-school settings may strengthen their professional posture, therefore, by sponsoring certification laws for their members.

Without the benefit of certification laws, for example, the plight of school counseling could be far more serious in this era of tight budgets. The assertion still can be heard that any school can have a full range of guidance services without the necessity of a counselor. Training and certification standards, however, provide specific evidence of special requirements needed by one who practices as a counselor. Credibility with our publics

can be enhanced with such data. The history of school counselor certification, however, reveals an important interaction between societal needs and professionalization. The members alone do not shape the requirements and expectations for counselors.

From a society concerned primarily with the vocational and moral development of its youth came the first signs of a new specialty. In 1919, the identified purpose of vocational guidance was "to assist persons to choose, prepare for, enter upon and make progress in an occupation" (Brewer, 1942). From that time to this, variations in the scope and direction of guidance and counseling have evolved. Prior to the Soviet space technology advances and the passage of the National Defense Education Act of 1958, only thirty-three states provided for the certification of counselors. Many of these were minimal or optional standards. (Shertzer and Stone, p. 120). The press for excellence in education brought with it designs to guide the able and talented into higher levels of education. Greater skill and use of tests, inventories and procedures needed in the guidance of the bright students gave way to the counselor as advocate for the disadvantaged and minorities. Group procedures and, more recently, consultation strategies have added importance, as counselors increasingly move toward their goal of assisting with the developmental needs of students. Each new emphasis evolving from societal needs brought a professional response. Increasingly the response is "proactive" rather than reactive. As the associations of counselors mature, signs of a mature profession also emerge.

In the 1960's the American School Counselor Association sponsored studies and publications concerning the role and functions of counselors. The first Association of Counselor Education and Supervision Standards (1967) for counselor training were also published and used widely in the assessment

of training programs. During this same period, certification requirements changed continually throughout the nation. This publication is evidence of the profession's anticipation for the needs of the next decade. Certification requirements and counselor training are in a process of potentially major revision again. By reviewing changes of the last decade, the prospect of future change also may be seen.

Certification requirements:

The 1960 edition of Guidance Workers Certification Requirements listed forty-one states and territories with counselor certification requirements. Three years later the 1963 revised edition indicated that twenty-one states and territories had changed their requirements. During the same period, an additional eight states and territories instituted requirements for the first time. As a result, forty-nine states and territories had certification requirements established by state or territorial legislatures or departments of education under authority granted by legislatures.

In 1967 a study by Vogel indicated that all fifty states and the District of Columbia had established requirements for the certification of counselors. Some of the factors included in the certification requirements are indicated in the Table I.

TABLE I

COUNSELOR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
IN THE UNITED STATES*
1967

Requirements	No. of States Requiring	Per Cent	No. of States Not Requiring	Per Cent
Teacher Certification	51	100	---	---
Teaching Experience	46	82	5	18
Work Experience	21	41	30	59
Bachelor's Degree	18	36	---	---
Master's Degree	33	64	---	---
Practicum	25	49	26	51
Specific Course Work	50	98	1	2

*Fifty states and District of Columbia

As indicated in the Table I, each state showed teacher certification as a prerequisite for counselor certification. Teaching experience (one to three years) was also required in forty-six states. The states of California, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, and Vermont did not require teaching experience as a prerequisite. Only in the State of Vermont was one year of related work experience required in lieu of teaching experience. Twenty-one states required from one-half to two years of other or related work experience. In Kentucky one year of work experience could be substituted for a year of teaching experience. An examination of state requirements from east to west did not indicate a regional trend or characteristic.

All states at this time required either a Bachelor's or Master's degree for certification as a school counselor. The Bachelor's degree was required by eighteen or 35% of the states. Twenty-four or 47% required a Master's degree and nine or 18% required that the Master's degree be in guidance. In 1967, the necessity for a supervised guidance experience or practicum had not been well established. Most of the states specifying such an experience required beginning counselors to serve an internship within their system under the supervision of one of their own certified counselors.

Although all states required at least a Bachelor's degree for certification, one state - Washington - did not require a particular number of courses or a specified subject matter area to be pursued in the preparation of counselors. Certification, according to standards adopted by the Washington State Board of Education, "is performance-based; preparation programs will be field - as well as college-based - with no universal teaching or degree requirements".

A large number of states responding to the 1967 survey indicated that changes in the certification requirements of counselors were being planned.

Consequently, in 1972 another survey was conducted which reflected the anticipated changes. (Vogel, 1972) Once again, it is noted that all states as well as the District of Columbia have established specific counselor certification requirements. These requirements are indicated in the Table II.

TABLE II

COUNSELOR CERTIFICATION IN THE UNITED STATES*
1972

Requirements	No. of States Requiring	Per Cent	No. of States Not Requiring	Per Cent
Teacher Certification	43	84	8	16
Teaching Experience	37	72	14	28
Work Experience	16	31	35	69
Bachelor's Degree	10	20	--	--
Master's Degree	36	72	--	--
Practicum	40	78	11	22
Specific Course Work	43	84	8	16

*Fifty States and District of Columbia

Of possible added interest is a report by Dudley and Ruff (1970) that over one-half of the states have some form of temporary or provisional counselor certification. For a permanent certificate, however, only four states allow less than a Master's degree and six states require hours beyond the Master's degree. Dudley and Ruff also report that five states will grant certificates to fully certificated counselors from all other states and fifteen will grant certificates to counselors with a Master's degree in guidance from an accredited college. Thirty-three states do not have a formal reciprocity agreement with other states (1970, p. 305).

Some changes have now taken place which may indicate a trend or prediction for future counselor training and certification. Much of the change appears to be the result of different points of view within the pro-

fession. For several years professional literature and meetings have concerned the problem of the relative value of teacher preparation and teaching experience as valid prerequisites for counselor certification. Other concerns have included the role of related work experience, whether a master's degree - thirty to forty semester hours - was needed, what specific course work should be pursued, and whether or not a practicum should be a part of the training program.

The effect of some differences may be reflected in the shifts of emphases in counselor certification requirements. Changes in certification requirements from 1967 to 1972 are indicated in Table III.

TABLE III

COMPARISON OF COUNSELOR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
IN THE UNITED STATES*
1967-1972

Requirements	State Requirements In 1967	State Requirements In 1972	Difference 1967-72 (+) (-)
Teacher Certification	51	43	-8
Teaching Experience	46	37	-9
Work Experience	21	16	-5
Bachelor's Degree	18	10	-8
Master's Degree	33	36	+3
Practicum	25	36	+11
Specific Course Work	50	43	-7

*Fifty states and District of Columbia

In 1967 all states required teacher certification as a prerequisite for counselor certification. By 1972, only five years later, eight states had deleted this requirement. During this same period, other significant trends emerged. These include increased emphasis on a Master's degree program, the requirement of a practicum or supervised guidance experience as

part of the training program, and an increased emphasis upon graduate level training for counselor preparation.

Another significant change not revealed by certification data is the increase in privileged communication statutes protecting the clients of school counselors. Only two states had statutes in the late 1960's. Through the vigorous action of several state associations, sixteen states have them at the present time (APGA Guidepost, 1973).

These changes taken in isolation might lead to many different conclusions. When viewed in concert with the changes taking place in the counselor's role, they lead to the conclusion that certification requirements are sensitive to the training and skills needed by today's school counselors. Teacher certification and teaching experience are required less for a variety of reasons. The fact that there is no evidence to support this requirement is often posited. In addition, alternative ways of gaining relevant school experience are available and may be at least as effective. (Dilley, et al, 1973)

As indicated in Table III, fifty states specified in 1967 the course work required for counselor certification. By 1972, this figure had changed to forty-three states specifying requirements. This does not mean that the seven states taking this step were unconcerned about the training of its counselors. On the contrary, they wanted a program of training that took into consideration the potential of the individual and his ability to perform as a professional in the counseling role. In some states, training programs of the universities are state approved and the universities share responsibilities for certifying the competence of the applicant.

An example of an emphasis on competence instead of courses may be

gleaned from the certification standards adopted by the Washington State Board of Education. Principles basic to the standards are:

1. Preparation should be related to performance and performance related to the objectives of the professional and his clients.

2. Preparation should be individualized and give recognition to personal styles.

3. Preparation programs should be planned and developed in a participatory manner by those affected.

4. Preparation is a career-long continuing process.

While not apparent in the data collected, the Washington certification plan may be a forerunner of plans yet to come. There has been considerable interest among counselor educators and state officials to pursue the possibility of competency based counselor training and certification. Also not revealed through the studies has been a tendency of counselor educators to offer courses and, in some cases, a major in guidance to undergraduates. While not directly related to one another they are alternatives to present assumptions made about requirements for the preparation and certification of counselors.

Most states not identifying specific course work did indicate areas in which training should be given. These included the traditional guidance courses of principles, organization, administration, techniques, educational and occupational information, appraisal, and vocational guidance. In addition, measurement and research techniques were stressed as well as courses in child growth and development, personality, communication, group process, sociological, anthropological, and other social science disciplines.

The greatest change in certification requirements between 1967 and 1972

was increased emphasis on the practicum or supervised experience requirement. In 1967 only 49% of the states required a practicum for certification. By 1972, 78% required the practicum indicating an increase of 29% during the five year period. This increased emphasis on the practicum may be interpreted as an effort on the part of the profession to make training and certification more pragmatic and less theoretical. In addition, by insisting on practicum experiences as a prerequisite for certification, the states are stressing the importance of the ability of the counselor to deal effectively with current student problems.

Projections for the future.

In summary, there are several projections which deserve consideration. As projections they are the authors' speculations on probable requirements and changes as suggested by the new standards, trends of the past decade, as well evolving concepts in the literature.

1. State departments will continue to be the certifying agency for school counselors.
2. The requirements for school counselor certification will be modified as the role of the counselor adjusts to the changing needs of students and society. Likely changes include:
   a. Experience requirements will become more flexible and less specific, i.e., teaching certificates and requirements will be less important than relevant experiences needed by one to become competent.
   b. The Master's degree will be the expected degree for persons in the counseling field. Entry into the field, however, may well begin for many at the

undergraduate level, or extend into a second year of graduate study involving a paid internship.

c. Training programs and certification requirements will increasingly reflect the influence of accountability through competency based or related systematic approaches to training.

d. Field experiences, practicum, and internships will be even more important in the requirements for persons in counseling.

e. Permanent certificates per se will be supplanted by requirements for periodic continuing professional renewal and reevaluation.

f. Specific areas of greater emphasis in the future will likely include group and consultation skills using knowledge in areas such as behavior change processes and career guidance for use in teacher and parent work.

g. Elementary counselor certification will receive separate distinction in more states as the number of counselors increases.

3. Certification for persons in non-school institutional settings will evolve as a means of further professionalization for these areas.

4. Reciprocity among the states will continue to improve but slowly due to the continuing autonomy of the states in establishing requirements unique to their systems.

Licensure

Unlike certification, licensure is an unfamiliar topic even to most persons trained at the doctoral level (Scott, 1971). Licensure, however,

will be an increasingly important consideration of the profession. While certification controls the use of a title among professions, licensure laws regulate both the practice and title of a profession. Due to the growing interest of psychologists in stronger licensing laws, counselors are being required to consider its implications as well.

Licensure for psychologists has existed in most states for a number of years. Some licensure laws, however, have been no more than certification laws labeled incorrectly. Alleged abuses against the public by some persons reflect badly on counselors and psychologists. In addition the possibility of insurance allowances for psychological services has brought into sharp focus the need for definition and regulation of those who offer services for pay to the public. Although both of these reasons are sufficient to justify the interest of the counseling profession in licensure, an underlying issue is particularly important to its future development. Will the practice and title of counselors be regulated by psychologists or will counselors be self-regulating as a profession, i.e., promote counselor licensure laws and regulate the practice of counseling. Obviously, there are other alternatives but the issue is essentially the same.

Background and Implications.

In 1967, an APA Committee on Legislation published guidelines and recommendations for the use of state psychological groups in the formulation of new or revised laws. They offered the following admonition as a preface to their recommendations:

> ....Psychology believes it undesirable to attempt to control the practice of all psychological functions by restricting them to members of any single profession except insofar as it can be clearly demonstrated that such restriction is necessary for the protection of the public. Psychology, therefore, does not favor narrowly restrictive legislation, which provides that only psychologists (or teachers, or physicians, etc.) may engage in certain applications of psychological knowledge and techniques (p. 1098).

The American Psychiatric Associations Task Force on Interprofessional Relations also declared that "there should no longer be divisive wedges between professions striving toward a common goal . . ." and that "no profession should attempt to define the functions and responsibilities of any other profession . . . complaints against other professionals should be directed to the responsible authorities of the profession concerned". (APA Monitor, 1973) The opportunity for cooperative relationships would seem to preclude the possibility of any substantive problems. Unfortunately, the counseling profession has not been active in the area of licensure, and as a consequence, problems are emerging.

Functions, like terminology, are difficult to define and delimit. Traditionally students in counseling have been asked to enumerate the distinction between counseling and psychotherapy. As an academic exercise there were few occasions to express concern about the arbitrary distinctions. As laws define function, however, the implications are immediate and substantial. For example, following the APA Legislation Committee's proposals rather closely, the Ohio Revised Code, Section 4732.01 defines "psychological procedures" to:

> ....include, but not restricted to, application of principles, methods, or procedures of understanding, predicting or influencing of behavior, such as the principles pertaining to learning, conditioning, perception, motivation, thinking, emotions or interpersonal relationships; the methods or procedures of verbal interaction, interviewing, counseling, behavior modification, environmental manipulation, group process, psychological psychotherapy, or hypnosis; and the methods or procedures of administering or interpreting tests of mental abilities, aptitudes, interests, attitudes, personality characteristics, emotions or motivation.

Clearly the activities identified under the rubric of counseling are covered by this definition. In fact, Deans of Students, reading specialists, tutors, and similar persons can be equally touched by such laws if they

accept payment for their services from individuals, hold themselves out to be psychologists or use psychological procedures that the State Board of Psychology "judges by uniform rule . . . to be a serious hazard to mental health and to require professional expertise in psychology." Obviously the State Board has an important function to perform.

Typically a state board will derive executive power directly from the governor, who is instructed to select its representatives from lists of names tendered by the associations which lobbied for the law. The boards thus derive quasi-legislative power as they are privileged "to make such rules as are necessary to conduct its business." Of related importance, the associations and profession gain new stature. They establish the criteria for membership in their association and nominate persons for the board from among their membership. The board in turn has the power to determine who requires a license, under what circumstances a license is issued, denied, or revoked, and what constitutes ethical practice.

As a further case in point the Ohio Board of Psychology has indicated that only licensed psychologists may supervise practicum and intern students. The students in practicum must be registered with the Board by their supervisor and written reports of their omissions and errors must be kept with indications of corrective actions taken. In the event the Board wishes to review these records for an individual, they may be requested. Further implications of the Ohio law include:

1. Student programs in counseling at the doctoral level and potentially Master's level for comm nity specialists, will require planning according to content and experiences needed to meet licensing expectations including successful completion of the Board examinations.

2. Employment of teaching and supervisory staff for university and training agencies will require determining in advance whether an individual can be licensed or at least meet Board criteria for licensure.

3. Laboratory, practicum and intern experiences of students will involve ethical and legal considerations in which the State Board of Psychology can act as a significant source of criteria and judgement.

4. Job mobility and credibility as a bona fided professional in counseling will be determined by licensure as a psychologist and membership in psychological associations.

5. Acceptance of psychological licensure will carry the implicit inference that persons trained as psychologists are preferrable to persons not trained as a psychologist, particularly in circumstances which involve the supervision of others who use psychological processes.

6. Persons functioning under certification laws and/or employed by federal, state, or local governmentally related organizations will be exempted in most instances. Persons supervised by licensed psychologists will be exempt also. On the other hand, anyone who holds himself out as a psychologist to the public or practices psychology for pay must be licensed. This may include the prohibition of counselors administering college board examinations for pay during non-school hours or private tutors using appraisal instruments to assess student progress. While the latter examples seem unlikely business, for a state board, they are theoretically possible and illustrate the extent of the Board's influence.

The last illustration reveals the substance of concern which can follow from inaction in the area of licensure. The answer to questions of what is appropriate or inappropriate will rest with the Board of another professional group. The counselor's comparative status in the professional order will be affected.

Another example of the significance of licensure on the counselors professional posture can be seen in Ohio. School psychologists are now certified under the same section of the Revised Code as the school counselor and licensed by the State Board of Psychology. This latter distinction qualified them to supervise other pupil personnel specialists and extends privilege communication to their constituents--a protection not available through the school counselor. The full impact of this distinction can be better appreciated by reading portions of a publication distributed by an independent Commission on Public School Personnel Policies in Ohio (1973). In their bulletin they urge school districts to ask, "Is the preparation for guidance counseling adequate for the difficult counseling situations or do these problems require the type of training that a school psychologist should have?" (p. 23) School districts are encouraged to "re-examine the need for school counselors . . ." (p. 38) Without belaboring the point, hopefully all members of the profession will appreciate the interrelatedness which each sub-group holds with the others. Licensure for school counselors is not an immediate issue, i.e., they are adequately identified by certification laws. Persons in private practice or community agencies, however, can benefit directly from licensure laws for counselors. Indirectly the entire profession will benefit.

Strategies for Professionalization

The section on certification revealed an active, evolving and healthy movement toward relevant requirements for counselors. There is no history

of licensure for counselors except as individuals identified with psychology. There are those individuals who are satisfied to fall under the rubric of psychology. This is one alternative open to those who enter private practice or pursue community mental health positions. In the opinion of the authors, it is not the most desirable alternative for the profession as a whole.

The need for licensure in the helping professions is generally accepted. There are reports of abuses not only by persons of little or no training but also by individuals whose competence for special areas of private practice are questionable. The public has a right to expect protection from the irresponsible acts of others within our profession. Of similar importance, the responsible practice of the great majority of counselors should be upheld by professional standards sponsored and moderated by counselor associations. With this rationale as a basis for alternative actions, the following suggestions are offered:

1. Counselor associations in each state should determine the nature of present licensure laws in the helping professions. This is already underway in some states. Separate or joint sponsorship with other professions such as school psychology can result in legislation needed to protect the public and provide an added means of professional identity for persons not covered by certification laws. New specialties such as community counseling can be particularly vulnerable if not afforded recognition and support.
2. Representation on boards of psychology should be pursued in those cases where legislation is long delayed or beyond the resources of a state group.

3. The national associations may be required to draw upon their collective resources to help sponsor test cases where discriminatory practices by other groups is revealed in the interpretation of licensure laws.
4. In those states where certification requirements are equivalent or higher than other pupil personnel specialists, privileged communication statutes should be explored for legislative action. As the nature of problems in both schools and community agencies encompass faculty relations, drugs, and similar topics, the extention of privileged communication to the clients of counselors takes on added significance.
5. As counselor training and certification have had sufficient opportunity to be tested with respect to the value and applicability of performance/competency requirements, consideration should be given to using this knowledge and experience to improve upon licensure requirements and procedures.

Conclusion.

The decade of the 1960's might be characterized as one of growth and emerging identity. The number of school counselors alone grew from 22,000 to an estimated 54,000 in 1970 including 10,000 elementary school counselors (U.S. Department of Labor, 1970) (Odell, 1973). Counselor role studies culminated in role statements and modifications in training standards.

The decade of the 1970's may well be characterized as one of continued growth and maturity as a profession. The projected growth in counselor positions is estimated to result in 75,000 school counselors, 21,000 rehabilitation counselors, and 10,800 employment counselors by 1980. This constitutes 40 percent, 75 percent, and 100 percent increases respectively

1967-1980. (U.S. Department of Labor, 1970) Too new to be a part of such projections, community counseling appears as a new specialty growing with the mental health movement.

The maturity as a profession will be evident by greater consolidation of its knowledge and competencies into training, certification, and licensing standards. The ethical code of the profession will take on new meaning as privileged communication and licensing boards add legal strength to the protection of the public. Obviously much of this maturity will result only from the patient, responsible commitment of individuals such as those who study this monograph. Their efforts, however, will shape the future dimensions of the profession.

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